

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: August 8, 2013

Agenda Item: Proposed 2013 Late Season Migratory Bird Regulations

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Approval of Proposed Rule

Time for this Presentation: 10 minutes

Background

Late season migratory bird hunting regulations are for ducks, geese, swans, and coots. Montana participates in both the Central and Pacific Flyways and follows U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service federal frameworks established in cooperation with the flyway councils. Frameworks are based on population status from winter surveys for geese and May population and habitat surveys for ducks. Duck seasons use an adaptive harvest approach with three specific regulation packages (restrictive, moderate, liberal). Habitat conditions and population numbers are favorable so liberal season frameworks are available for Montana to implement in 2013. Proposed seasons are listed below. A split season for Central Flyway geese was in effect last year. For this year a similar split, with the last Thursday/Friday closed, is proposed for the Pacific Flyway to allow an additional weekend of hunting opportunity. The daily bag limit for white geese in the Pacific Flyway is proposed to increase from 10 to 20. Final federal frameworks, unknown at this time, may allow a 2-bird daily bag for canvasbacks and could also be more restrictive for scaup. The USFWS recently approved a change to allow possession limits to be 3 times the daily bag limit for all species that currently have a 2 times possession limit. FWP proposes changing possession limits accordingly.

Central Flyway

Youth Waterfowl Season: Sept. 21-22 (2 days – limits below apply)

Duck, Coot and Tundra Swan (500 permits only) Season: Sept. 28–Jan. 2 (97 days)

- Ducks: Daily bag limit shall be 6 ducks or mergansers, possession limit 3 times daily limit. Daily bag limit shall not include more than 5 mallards no more than 2 of which may be hens, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 3 wood ducks, 2 pintails, and 1 canvasback.
- Coots: 15 daily, possession limit 3 times the daily limit

Goose Season: Sept. 28 – Jan. 8 AND Jan. 11-12 (105 days); Closed Jan. 9th and 10th.

- Geese: Dark - 5 daily, possession limit 3 times the daily limit
White -20 daily, possession limit 3 times the daily limit

Falconry: Ducks and coots: Sept. 21 – Jan. 5; Geese: Sept. 28 – Jan. 8 and Jan. 11-12

Pacific Flyway

Youth Waterfowl Season: Sept. 21-22 (2 days – limits below apply)

Ducks and coots: Sept. 28–Jan. 8 AND Jan. 11-12 (105 days); Closed Jan. 9th and 10th.

- Ducks: Daily bag limit shall be 7 ducks or mergansers, possession limit 3 times the daily limit. Daily bag limit shall not include more than 2 hen mallards, 2 pintails, 2 redheads, and 1 canvasback.
- Coots: 25 daily and in possession

Goose season: Sept. 28-Jan. 8 AND Jan. 11-12 (105 days); Closed Jan. 9th and 10th.

- Geese: Dark - 4 daily, possession limit 3 times the daily limit
White - 20 daily, possession limit 3 times the daily limit

Swan (500 permits only) Season: Oct. 12–Dec. 1

Falconry dates: Ducks, coots, and geese: Sept. 28 – Jan. 8 AND Jan. 11-12; Closed Jan. 9th and 10th.

Public Involvement Process & Results

The public comment period on any adopted proposal will run through 5 p.m., Monday, Aug. 26, with final adoption at the Aug. 29 commission meeting.

Proposed Motion

I move the commission adopt the proposed late season migratory bird regulations as presented by FWP.